



State and local officials congratulate Governor Gray Davis, above, following press conference held against the colorful background provided by the North Hollywood Metro Rail Station. PHOTOS BY JOSÉ UBALDO



## **Governor's \$5.2 Billion Transportation Plan Has \$887 Million for MTA Buses, Rail, Rapid Bus**

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(April 6) With the North Hollywood subway station as a backdrop, Gov. Gray Davis today announced a \$5.2 billion transportation plan he said would provide \$887 million to the MTA for buses, light rail and bus rapid transit projects.

**MTA  
Reactions to  
Governor's  
Remarks**

The governor deliberately chose the Metro Red Line station as the symbolic site to announce a plan intended to relieve transportation gridlock in Southern California.

**Ease LA traffic congestion**

In the introduction to his Traffic Congestion Relief Plan, Davis said he "wants to ease traffic congestion for Los Angeles-area residents by investing in mass transit and railway projects, expanding commuter and HOV lanes and assessing regional growth."

In his North Hollywood remarks, the governor noted that the California economy is creating nearly 18 percent of all jobs in the United States, but, he said, "People can't work if they can't get to work."

A breakdown of the \$887 million in capital funds intended for the MTA shows:

- \$150 million to purchase up to 385 new low-emission or alternative-fuel buses.
- \$236 million for an Eastside Corridor light-rail transit line from Union Station to Atlantic in East Los Angeles, with "the specific choice of tunneling through Boyle Heights from 1st and Boyle to 1st and Lorena."
- \$256 million for a Mid-City Corridor bus rapid transit project on Wilshire Boulevard from Vermont Avenue to downtown Santa Monica. The funding also would cover either a bus rapid transit line from Figueroa Street to downtown Santa Monica or a light-rail line from the Metro Blue Line to Santa Monica.
- \$245 million for a San Fernando Valley Corridor bus rapid transit line along the Burbank-Chandler right-of-way from the North Hollywood subway station to Warner Center.



"We're very pleased that the governor has increased his focus on the transportation needs of the state and of this county," said CEO Julian Burke. "His plan makes it more likely that we will be able to build and operate the selected alternatives on the three transportation corridors. It also gives us substantial help with respect to our bus needs."

#### **Funding exceeds MTA request**

The MTA Board had directed Burke to seek new state funding of \$632 million for the three transportation corridors - \$236 million for Eastside, \$251 million for Mid-City and \$145 million for the San Fernando Valley. The governor's plan would exceed that amount by providing \$256 million for Mid-City and \$245 million for the Valley.

The governor's transportation plan would provide an estimated \$40 million to close the funding gap for construction of the 13.7-mile Pasadena Metro Blue Line. The plan also includes \$100 million for extra tracks between LA and Fullerton for Metrolink, Intercity and AMTRAK trains, plus \$10 million for two new locomotives and 10 cars for the San Diego rail corridor.

#### **\$550 million for highways**

The governor's transportation funding includes a total of \$550 million for highway projects. Among those projects are HOV lanes on the San Diego, Santa Monica and Santa Ana freeways. Funds would be provided for widening a portion of the Santa Ana freeway to 10 lanes and for the completion of six lanes of Rt. 71 through Pomona. Interchange improvements in Norwalk, Sherman Oaks and Ventura County would be funded.

To obtain the funding for his transportation plan, Davis would earmark about \$2.8 billion in the state budget surplus. Another \$2.2 billion would be raised through a bond issue expected to be placed on the ballot in November. Over the next decade, the governor has proposed spending a total of \$15 billion on transportation - with \$10 billion of that coming from federal and local sources.

The transportation plan news conference in North Hollywood was the governor's second of the day. Earlier, he had spoken in San Jose, choosing the Diridon Caltrain Station as his venue. On Friday, he will continue his announcement schedule with appearances at the Old Town Transit Center in San Diego and at a Highway 99 intersection in Fresno.

[Back to MTA Report](#)